

**STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN Q. ABERNATHY
NOMINEE FOR THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE**

May 17, 2001

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it is indeed a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to appear today before the members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. I have had the pleasure of talking with many members of this Committee over the past *few* weeks and I want to thank all of you for taking the time to share your thoughts and concerns with me.

I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Bush to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Communications Commission. Having had the opportunity to work in various capacities in the Federal government, I know that it is a genuine privilege to be in government service. My government experience has also led me to understand the importance and necessity of developing and administering sound public policy.

If confirmed, it will be a special privilege as well to work with Chairman Powell—as well as my colleagues on the Commission –and with the highly dedicated and competent FCC staff I think that Chairman Powell is a leader of unusual foresight and energy - one who has charted a challenging agenda of promoting competition, deregulation, and internal reform - and it will be a distinct pleasure to serve with him at the Commission.

If confirmed, I also look forward to working with the Congress - and this Committee in particular - with the understanding that fundamentally it is the Commission's responsibility to administer and implement communications policy as set forth by Congress. I understand this role and welcome the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

Despite the challenges facing the FCC, I think it is important to remember that we have communications systems, communications industries, and communications choices that are second to none - that are, in fact, the envy of the world. This is true across the board - from voice telecommunications to television, from two-way radio systems to satellite platforms. I also recognize, however, that through its decisions and policies, it is the responsibility of the FCC to help insure that this excellence and world leadership continues into the 21st Century.

In this regard, communications policy stands at a critical juncture for consumers and for the economy. As Chairman Powell has said, the FCC is facing a unique challenge in that virtually all communications industry segments are in the midst of revolution - attempting to adapt to the most fundamental changes in their history. And frequently this translates into FCC proceedings in which the Commission is called upon to balance many competing interests and industries,

These are not easy issues - and I do not presume to think that they are. But if confirmed, I pledge to you to thoroughly weigh these critical issues as they come before the Commission, to deal with the myriad competing interests fairly, and to be guided always by the principles and policies set forth by Congress in the Communications Act.

With your support and approval, I look forward to the opportunity to serve the people of this country at the Federal Communications Commission. And I look forward to working with the Committee and my colleagues at the FCC on the communications policies that vitally affect the lives of us all.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to be here today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.